

STATEMENT by Mr. Ruslan Nimchynskyi,
Deputy Head of Directorate of International Security and Disarmament
at the Ministerial Meeting on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the CWC
1 October 2012, New York

Mr Secretary General,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has become one of the milestones of the global peace and security as it entered into force 15 years ago. That was an indispensable step of the international community towards non-proliferation and disarmament.

One can hardly overestimate the role of the CWC in irreversible elimination and non-proliferation of the whole WMD category. Indeed, until nowadays risks related to the misuse of WMD remain one of the most hazardous challenges for the freedom-minded, civilized and democratic international community. The unconditional compliance with the CWC remains in the priority list of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation policy of Ukraine.

CWC has demonstrated in practice that nothing is impossible in the sphere of disarmament. Implementation of the Convention offers useful lessons and experience.

Being the most accepted international legal instrument in the area of disarmament and nonproliferation CWC with its 188 Member States is unique political phenomenon and a showcase of synergy of the political will and common sense. OPCW Member States already represent about 98% of the global population and landmass, as well as 98% of the worldwide chemical industry.

Notwithstanding the fact that some CW possessor State Parties missed the target to eliminate weapons by the defined date of 29 April 2012, we welcome their commitment to viable and verifiable schedule of destruction.

Ukraine welcomes the decision of the last Conference of the State Parties on the final extended deadline for complete destruction of the remaining stockpiles. We have full confidence that possessor states will do their best to fulfill their commitments within the shortest time possible.

All together we have brought peace and safety into the world and restored hope and faith in every single human heart on the planet. And now we must prove that future without chemical weapons is not only a naïve political slogan, but a real objective to be achieved if we all remain loyal to the goals and principles enshrined in the CWC.

At the same time it is indisputable that getting rid of declared stockpiles of chemical weapons is an important but not the most difficult part of the chemical disarmament process. This will continue to be a path with many challenges and unexpected problems demanding immediate reaction and decision. For example, recent developments in the Middle East set us thinking again about the urgent necessity to bind all international actors with the CWC obligations. In other words universality of CWC is an important factor to enhance its credibility and ensure irreversible character of chemical disarmament and non-proliferation in global dimension.

In a time when the world faces the increased risk of chemical weapons falling into the hands of terrorist organizations we all must double our efforts in order to avert the evil scenarios, which can impend anywhere. We should do not forget about diversity of possible challenges in light of the changing security environment and rapid developments in science and technology.

Positive achievements in this area will give us the possibility to focus on other OPCW priorities. In this regard I would like to highlight importance of the verification mechanism, interstate cooperation in the field of chemical safety and security as well as further OPCW engagement with the international organizations, scientific and industrial players. Ukrainian side expects that these issues will be duly addressed during the Review Conference of 2013.

But one thing is crystal clear today. OPCW proved to be effective mechanism in destruction of chemical weapons, in monitoring international transfers of listed chemicals as well as in promoting fruitful international cooperation aimed at further development of science and technology. Recognizing the important role played by OPCW in strengthening the international peace and security as well as in contributing to sustainable development Ukraine supports common efforts targeted at preserving and even broadening OPCW's significant potential to be able effectively respond to emerging threats and challenges to security, in particular in the non-proliferation direction.

Distinguished delegates,

Ukraine declares its full support of the Commemorative Declaration and reaffirms its strong determination to put every effort for achieving the goals stipulated by the Convention.

Thank you.